Reply.—As regards taluk boards, it has to be observed that sufficient time has not elapsed to judge of the success of even the Town Improvement Committees. As for village punchayets, even in Madras, where a Regulation was passed so long ago as 1816 on this subject, its provisions are scarcely availed of. I think it is too premature now to introduce it here. In regard to honorary magistrates, the learned Chief Justice is of opinion that the services of retired officers may be utilised for this purpose. This would receive consideration, when I come to know more of such gentlemen. This will also require legislation.

204. Desirability of appointing a Council in Travancore to advise the head of the revenue administration as in Madras.

This subject which stood in the name of *Mr. R. Narayana Pillai* (*Ettumanur*) was withdrawn by him.

205. Is there any agreement by which the Government or the public are bound to act according to the wishes of the British Government in matters which are likely to bring serious loss to Travancore?

This subject which stood in the name of *Mr. M. Narayana Panicker* (*Ampalapuzha*) was also withdrawn.

206. Giving encouragement to newspapers conducted on sound lines.

Mr. M. Narayana Panicker (*Ampalapuzha*) represented that Government did not take the press into their confidence, though the State had advanced considerably in civilisation and there were several responsible organs of public opinion in existence. Of course, both good and bad newspapers were printed and circulated in the country, but it was a pity that the former should be made to suffer for the sins of the latter. The meetings of the Legislative Council and the Town Improvement Committees were even now closed to press representatives. The member prayed that a press-room might be opened in the Secretariat and free admission given to the representatives of newspapers conducted on sound lines into this room and also for the meetings of the Legislative Council and the Town Improvement Committees. Further, in the matter of printing, Government were slow to encourage private enterprise and it was painful to note that printing contracts were given to outside firms in preference to local ones. He suggested the desirability of passing some rules to enable well-con-

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ducted journals being distinguished from scurrilous papers, and due encouragement given to the former by Government notifications being given to them for publication and Government printing works being ordered to be executed by them.

Reply.—Regulation II of 1079 is the present law on the subject and section 26 enables Government to frame the necessary rules. From what I have been able to gather during my short experience, I think it is necessary to frame rules for the regulation of printing-presses and newspapers. Whether it will be in the way of allowing further freedom or in the way of checking the abuse of the privilege, it will be time enough to consider when the matter is taken up. The statement that the meetings of the Legislative Council are closed to press representatives is incorrect, the fact being that they are now allowed free admission. As regards job-works, they are being given to local presses whenever necessary and feasible. If the member refers to one or two big works recently entrusted to outside firms, I believe that must have been due to special causes. Ordinarily, all Government works will be executed in the Government Press. But where it is found desirable to get such works done by private agencies, the claims of local presses will receive due consideration.

207. Cancelment of the notifications regarding telegraphic messages and Anchal petitions.

Mr. M. K. Govinda Pillai, B. A., B. L., (Trivandrum) stated that the rules at present required specific information being superscribed on registered covers, before they could be accepted. It was also laid down that telegraphic messages would not be received. These provisions worked hardship in the case of ignorant petitioners and in emergent circumstances. He therefore requested that Government might be pleased to cancel the notifications if possible or make such modifications in them as would exclude at least emergent matters from within their scope. He further represented that other officers, for whose guidance these rules were evidently never intended, were also rejecting such communications, much to the detriment and inconvenience of the public.

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